

**What is claimed is:**

1. A porous composition comprising:  
up to about 100% by weight silica; and  
up to about 60% by weight alumina; wherein the composition has a density of at  
least about 6 pounds per cubic foot ( $96.1 \text{ kg/m}^3$ ).
2. The composition of claim 1, wherein the silica comprises up to about 50% by  
weight cristobalite.
3. The composition of claim 1, further comprising an additional metal oxide.
4. The composition of claim 1, further comprising tantalum oxide or zirconium  
oxide.
5. The composition of claim 1, further comprising carbon fiber.
6. The composition of claim 1, further comprising a drug.
7. The composition of claim 1, further comprising silica gel.
8. The composition of claim 1, wherein the density is at least about 8 pounds per  
cubic foot ( $128 \text{ kg/m}^3$ ).
9. The composition of claim 1, wherein the density is at least about 12 pounds per  
cubic foot ( $192 \text{ kg/m}^3$ ).
10. The composition of claim 1, wherein the density is at least about 36 pounds per  
cubic foot ( $577 \text{ kg/m}^3$ ).
11. The composition of claim 1, wherein the density is at least about 64 pounds per  
cubic foot ( $1025 \text{ kg/m}^3$ ).
12. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition  
is up to about 5 microns.
13. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition  
is at least about 5 microns.
14. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition  
is at least about 50 microns.
15. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition  
is at least about 100 microns.

16. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition is about 0.1 micron and about 1 micron.
17. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition is about 5 microns to about 10 microns.
18. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition is about 20 microns to about 50 microns.
19. The composition of claim 1, wherein the mean pore diameter of the composition is about 100 microns to about 400 microns.
20. The composition of claim 1, wherein the surface properties of the composition has been modified by a chemical reaction.
21. The composition of claim 1, wherein the surface properties of the composition has been modified by a chemical reaction to increase the hydrophilicity.
22. The composition of claim 1, wherein the surface properties of the composition has been modified by a chemical reaction to increase the hydrophobicity.
23. The composition of claim 1, wherein the exposed surface is at least about 50% silicon dioxide.
24. The composition of claim 1, wherein the exposed surface is at least about 75% silicon dioxide.
25. The composition of claim 1, wherein the exposed surface is at least about 95% silicon dioxide.
26. A porous composition prepared from a composition comprising:  
 about 1% to about 50% by weight alumina;  
 about 50% to about 98% by weight silica; and  
 about 1% to about 5% by weight boron.